

**BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: June 27, 2013

Meeting No.: 168

Project: EBDI PUD –Gateway Hotel

Phase: Schematic

Location: Ashland Avenue, Wolfe Street, E. Madison Street

PRESENTATION:

David Westerlund gave the introduction to the project and project team. The team included Gensler Architects and Mahan Rykiel Landscape Architects. The hotel development was described as a gateway site, located between Johns Hopkins, Kennedy Kreiger Institute, and the larger EBDI development. The team held a meeting with stake holders that included: Johns Hopkins, Kennedy Kreiger, Forest City and others. User mapping was also undertaken.

1. The design objectives of the project include the creation of the following:
 - a. A dynamic hub-destination
 - b. A home away from home- extended stay hotel
 - c. A community bridge – connection to Baltimore
 - d. A health and wellness lifestyle
2. The design guidelines include:
 - a. Design for all senses
 - b. Creation of a personal scale
 - c. A thoughtful use of manmade/urban elements

Jim Camp from Gensler presented the master plan for the hotel and Raffael Scasserra walked through the building design. The site is located on the south end of the proposed Eager Park. The park is to act as the living room for the hotel. The site is a connection between the urban and park setting. The Hotel attempts to connect seamlessly to the park with the same paving pattern being used on both sides of Ashland Avenue. The hotel is configured with stepped back massing to allow the park to come up and over the building through a series of semi-public and non-public terraces. The height of the structure is located toward the urban setting and cooling towers. The site slopes dramatically toward the park. The lobby will be transparent and active 24/7 along Wolfe Street. The building will have glass walls to visually connect to the street and create an openness and light on the lower floor. The basic building form is a podium or retail and parking with the hotel room massing sitting on top in the middle of the base and along Wolfe St. The corner of Wolfe and Madison is eroded at the ground level to provide vehicular entrance and exit to the front door drop off. The port cochere will be paved and have bollards to distinguish between the pedestrians and the cars. Parking, loading, and service are located off of Durham Street. Temporary parking is also being located at the ground level off of Madison Street with an additional curb cut for access. It is intended that this space will be a future retail space and that parking is the interim use. The base along the north side fronting the park is a 2 level retail ‘wall’ with an additional 20’ setback from the sidewalk to provide an outdoor seating

terrace for the first level retailers. The second floor retail is accessed from the mid-block stair along Wolfe Street. The retailers have individual doors and it is envisioned that the plaza/terrace portion of that level would be under the control of a restaurant located at that upper level.

1. Program
 - a. Hotel-194 keys
 - b. Extended stay- 160, 975 sf.
 - c. Retail
 - d. Amenity-outdoor terrace, roof terrace
 - e. Parking
2. Parking and Circulation
 - a. A pedestrian zone goes around the building on the public street area.
 - b. The Parking entry is on Durham Street and also on E. Madison Street (interim).
 - c. The circulation plan has been vetted by the Department of Transportation.
 - d. Twenty (20) spaces of interim parking are to be transitioned to the retail component, and 60 permanent spaces will be located below the hotel.
3. Outdoor Terrace
 - a. Flexible space/lawn
 - b. Seating areas for views to the park
 - c. Function free space with paving
 - d. Create buffer on west end to control views
 - e. Outdoor rooms

COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL:

1. A strong street wall along Ashland Avenue would build a pinnacle to the park. The hotel tower should have a visual relationship with and relate directly to the park. The tower should be placed more strategically on the plinth and the overall massing should be the terminal point to the 3 block park being created on axis to it as described in the Master Plan. Additional rendering and presentations should include the Grad Student housing building adjacent to this on Wolfe Street in order to clearly express the relationship between the two.
2. The logic of the having the hotel entry on N. Wolfe and E. Madison is in question in terms of access, circulation, and congestion. The port cochere may not offer a pleasant entrance experience located next to the cooling facility/power plant.
3. The success of second floor retail is in question especially with the limited access. The access on Wolfe Street to the second floor retail and terrace is not very visible.
4. The retail creates a barrier to the park and public access. The park doesn't go up and over, or connect seamlessly to the hotel as described. Reconsider this connection concept or create an actual, physical connection between the two. The terrace landscape is an opportunity to provide access but as proposed, has very limited public access if at all.
5. The design doesn't clearly address the presented mission or objectives.
6. Massing options and strategies should have been included with this presentation in order to help frame the concept. The overall building massing is not creating a link between the concept and the actual form.

PANEL ACTION:

Recommend continued study and return to the Panel for additional schematic review.

Attending:

Peng Gu – Mahan Rykiel Associates

Jim Camp, Raffael Scasserra, Olya Karnatova, Maria Rucks – Gensler

Christopher Shea – EBDI

John Cowan, Troy Rector – Hensel Phelps

David Westerlund – LSH Gateway

Dave Holmes – Capital Development

Ms. Allen*, Messrs. Bowden, Haresign, and Burns - UDARP Panel Members

Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Laurie Feinberg, Wolde Ararsa, Natasha Becker, Tamara Woods, Theo Ngongang, Mark Cameron – Dept. of Planning